# हठतत्वकौमुदी

# Haṭhatatvakaumudī

**A treatise on**
**Haṭhayoga**
**by**
***Sundaradeva***

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There are other quotations names and sources of which are not mentioned. They are indicated by such terms as '*taduktam*', '*uktaṃ ca*', '*granthāntare*', '*kecit tu*'.

All these references confirm that *sundaradeva* had studied extensive *yoga* literature for writing his treatise.

**Contents of the text**

*sundaradeva* calls his treatise of *haṭhayoga* as *haṭhatatvakaumudī* which means 'Light on the Principles of *haṭhayoga*'. The contents of the text are divided into 57 chapters for which he uses the term '*udyota*'. The distribution of various topics is as follows:

**Chapter I:**

According to the Indian tradition, in this introductory chapter, the author starts his treatise with the salutation to Lord *gaṇeśa* and *ādinātha īśa*. Recognising the importance of *prāṇa* in the practice of *haṭhayoga*, the author also offers his salutation to *prāṇa*. The purpose of the treatise, according to the author, is to help the ordinary aspirants to practice *haṭhayoga* without any delusion. Therefore he has composed this treatise based on the essential principles of *yoga* drawn from various sources. He emphasises on the fact that the knowledge of '*saṅketa*' in the traditional texts is essential for the success in *haṭhayoga*, which is possible only through the grace of a *guru*. Mere knowledge of the texts is not enough. He mentions about the fortified and unfortified bodies and emphasises on the need of fortifying the body by a *yogī* through the fire of *yogic* practices. This is not possible without the control of *prāṇa* which pervades all the parts of the body.

**Chapter II:**

For the success in *yoga*, the knowledge of *āsana*,

*kumbhaka*, *mudrā* etc. through the mouth of the *guru* and their practice is essential. Then only there can be the entry of *prāṇā* into *suṣumnā* and attaining the void state of the mind possible. For this union of *prāna* and mind is necessary. They are interdependent. Mind controls all the sense organs and mind is governed by *prāna*.

This chapter also mentions the characteristics of the *guru* and *śiṣya* meaning the teacher and the taught.

Liking solitude, indifference towards sensual objects, devoid of lethargy, courage, firm determination, inquisitiveness about the Ultimate Reality, follower of the *vratas*, firm faith on *guru* like God, control of the senses, consuming moderate diet, are the characteristics of a good disciple.

He is considered as real *guru* whose gaze is fixed without the help of any object, whose *vāyu* becomes stable without any effort and whose mind becomes steady without the object of concentration.

To be continuously engaged in *yogic* practices and to behave according to the guidance of the *guru* is the source of success in *yoga*.

**Chapter III:**

While explaining the importance of various *yogic* practices, selection of appropriate season and region or place has been emphasised. Any disregard to these factors can result in various complaints like loss of memory, dumbness, blindness, fever, loss of hearing, respiratory troubles etc. In order to overcome such problems as a result of faulty practices, some remedies have also been described.

**Chapter IV:**

This chapter deals with the importance of moderate diet during *yogic* practices. Consumption of excess food, or undesirable items in the food or fasting and their ill-effects have been elaborately discussed.

**Chapter V:**

According to the propensities of the individual aspirants they are classified as *mandādhikārī* (lower category), *adhimātra* (moderate) and *uttara* (superior). Their characteristics and period required for the success in *yoga* have also been mentioned. A daily routine and precautions have been described for the *sādhaka*.

**Chapter VI:**

This chapter relates to the discussion of *yamas* and *niyamas*. Ten kinds of *yamas* and *niyamas* according to *yājñavalkya* have been discussed. *ahiṃsā* has been treated as *mahāvrata*.

**Chapter VII:**

This chapter deals with the topic of *āsanas*. After mentioning suitable place, importance and effects various *āsanas* have been described with their utility in different disorders. For example, *dhanurāsana* and *kukkuṭāsana* for *nāḍīśuddhi* or purification of the *nāḍīs*, *matsyendrapīṭha* for pain and fever, *mayūrāsana* for pain, fever, indigestion and removal of toxins, *śavāsana* for mental rest, *siṃhāsana* in the disorders of *vāta* humour, *bhadrāsana* in the disorders of *kapha* and *vāta* humours, *vīrāsana* for the stability of the mind, *kūrmāsana* for eighty types of disorders of *vāta* humour, *prasāritāsana* for the attainment of *rājayoga* state, *padmāsana* for *prāṇāyāma*, *baddhapadmāsana* in the disorders of *vāta* and *kapha* humours and in fever. *yonyāsana* or *siddhāsana* for

the control of *apāna*. *paścimatāna āsana* for the control of *vāyu*, improving digestion and removing flatulence. *svastikāsana* for the peace of mind. *padmāsana* and *siddhāsana* have been greatly eulogised from the point of *yoga*. Along with the practice of *āsanas*, practice of *prāṇāyāma*, *mudrā*, *dhāraṇā* are also recommended.

**Chapter VIII:**

It describes eight purificatory processes which include *dhauti*, *cakrī*, *basti*, *neti*, *gajakaraṇī*, *trāṭaka* and two forms of *nauli* as *āntar nauli* and *bāhya nauli*.

**Chapter IX:**

Before the practice of *prāṇāyāma* some special practices are recommended which include *meru-cālana*, *cakrībandha*, *tānābhyāsa* and *cāraṇā*. *cāraṇā* has been described of ten types. This is a new information for the readers.

**Chapter X:**

This chapter deals with *kumbhaka* and its varieties. After discussing the importance and effects of *kumbhaka* eight known varieties like *sūryabhedana*, *ujjāyī* etc. have been described. Apart from these some unknown varieties have also been described. These are—*utkarṣa kumbhaka*, *apakarṣa*, *sahaja kumbhaka*, *cakra kumbhaka*, *gadā kumbhaka*, *nāḍīviśuddhi kumbhaka*, *bhūtaśuddhi kumbhaka*, *śṛṅkhalā kumbhaka*, *jīvacāla kumbhaka*, *merucāla kumbhaka* and *ghaṭibandha kumbhaka*.

**Chapter XI:**

Importance of practice in *yoga* has been described here. Whether it is the cure of diseases, or purification of the *nāḍīs*, or leading *prāṇa* into the *suṣumnā* or attaining the state of *unmanī*, one cannot get success without practice. As the

practice increases and maturity develops, an individual progresses towards the attainment of desired goal.

**Chapter XII:**

Before one progresses further in his *sādhanā* it is necessary to remove the physical distress. Varieties of practices of *vāyusādhana* have been described. These practices include sucking of the air through the mouth making it like a beak of the crow, sucking the air through the crevices of the teeth, *prāṇadhāraṇā* at the toes, navel and nose, etc.

**Chapter XIII:**

Utility of *haṭhayogic* practices, especially that of *mudrās* has been explained.

**Chapter XIV:**

After defining the word '*mudrā*' ten *mudrās* have been enumerated. However, only two *mudrās*, namely, *viparītakaraṇī* and *khecarī* have been mentioned. The process of *lambikākaraṇā* has been specially described.

**Chapter XV:** .

In this chapter three *bandhas*, namely, *mūlabandha*, *uḍḍiyānabandha* and *jalandharabandha* and three *mudrās*, namely, *mahāmudra*, *mahabandha* and *mahāvedha* have been elaborately described.

**Chapter XVI:**

It deals with the topic of *bindu*. For the control of *bindu vajroli* and its two types *sahajoli* and *amaroli* have been recommended.

**Chapter XVII:**

Control of *bindu* has been greatly eulogised. It gives physical beauty, strength etc. There is a correspondence

between *nāda*, *bindu* and *manas* and control of one brings control of the other.

**Chapter XVIII:**

In this chapter again there is a description of *khecarī* and for the success of *khecarī* the *khecari mantra* has been prescribed. Repetition of this *mantra* five hundred thousand times is said to bring *siddhi*. To attain success through *mantra* there is also a description of the repetition of *bījamantras*, especially *vākbīja* at *mūlādhāra*, *kāmabīja* at *hṛdaya* and *śaktibīja* at the *ājñācakra*. Eighteen hundred thousand repetition of these *bījamantras* are said to bestow all the supernormal attainments.

**Chapter XIX:**

Man becomes miserable due to his ignorance, his *karmas* and attachment with worldly objects. When he develops detachment or *vairāgya* and the knowledge dawns upon him, he becomes liberated.

**Chapter XX:**

Man receives the perishable body depending upon the impressions of his past *karmas*. In this body the *mantra haṃ* and *saḥ* is continuously repeated in the form of inhalations and exhalations. In the eight petalled lotus of the heart the *jīva* is constantly moving 21600 times in the form of inhalations and exhalations. This kind of repetition of *mantra* is called *ajapā*. This body is in the form of *haṃsa* and *prāṇā* and *apāna* are its two wings.

**Chapter XXI:**

In order to keep the body fit and free from diseases two *kalpa* treatments have been referred to which are *muṇḍi kalpa* and *vārāhi kalpa*. It is also described how the *jīva* moves in the *dvādaśāra cakra* and how and why this body in the

form of abode of *brahman* perishes.

**Chapter XXII:**

This chapter describes how the ten vital airs as *prāṇa*, *apāna* etc. conduct different functions in the body including the absorption of *vāyu*, distribution of the nourishment through food-intake.

**Chapter XXIII:**

Elaborate description is given of the fourteen main channels (*nāḍīs*) their location and functions, especially the location and working of *iḍā*, *piṅgalā* and *suṣumnā*.

**Chapter XXIV:**

In this chapter is given the description of 16 *ādhāras* in two forms. One form includes six *cakras* like *mūlādhāra* etc. and the ten *nāḍīs* which maintain efficient working of the body. The other from includes *netrādhāra*, *vyomādhāra*, *nāsikā* (nose), *jihvā* (tongue) which are commonly known among the *yogis*. Knowledge of these *ādhāras* is essential for the *yogis*.

**Chapter XXV:**

From this chapter onwards starts the discussion of *cakras*. Piercing of *cakras* leads to the state of *laya* (absorption). This chapter deals with the description of *mūlādhāra* with its location, colour, *bījākṣaras*, deity etc. Similarly, there is a description of *kanda*, *yoni* and *suṣumnā*.

**Chapter XXVI:**

Here description of *svādhiṣṭhāna cakra* with its petals, colour, *akṣara*, deity etc. is given.

**Chapter XXVII to XXXI:**

These chapters describe the *cakras* like *maṇipūra*,

*viśuddha*, *ājñā* and *sahasrāra* along with the significance of *ājñā* and *sahasradala*.

**Chapter XXXII:**

Referring to the other texts the *ṣaṭcakras* are called *jyotisthāna*, *nābhimūla* (root of the navel) as *bindusthāna* which is the source of the production of *nāda*.

**Chapter XXXIII:**

For the attainment of *abhyudaya* and *niḥśreyas* elaborate description and discussion of *yonimudrā* is given in this chapter. *bindu*, *nāda* and *śakti* have been considered as the three *mātrās* of *prāṇā* itself.

**Chapter XXXIV:**

It describes the importance of *nāḍīśuddhi* in *yoga* which is attained through the practice of *aṣṭakarmas*. Purification of *nāḍīs* is essential for the success in *prāṇāyāma*, control of mental activities and *bindujaya*.

**Chapter XXXV:**

In this chapter is described the importance of preliminaries before the *nāḍīśuddhi*. In this is suggested the use of *vallijacūrṇā* mixed with ghee to be kept in the mouth before the practice of *prāṇāyāma*. Similarly, it is suggested to start *nāḍīśodhana* on an auspicious day after remembering one's tutelary deity like *gaṇeśa* etc.

**Chapter XXXVI:**

There is an elaborate discussion on the topic of *nāḍīśuddhi*. Before the practice of *nāḍīśuddhi prāṇāyāma* importance of *mitāhāra* (moderate diet) and its influence has been discussed in the light of varied opinions on it.

## Chapter XXXVII:

From this chapter onwards a discussion on *prāṇāyāma* begins. The measure of the body is stated to be 96 *aṅgulas* (digits) and the measure of *prāṇa* is 12 *aṅgulas* (digits) more. One who reduces the measure of *prāṇā* to the minimum is considered a real *yogī*. *prāṇā* should be held through *candranāḍī* after performing *nāḍīśuddhi*.

## Chapter XXXVIII:

This chapter gives the definition of *prāṇāyāma*, describes the three phases of *pūraka*, *kuṃbhaka*, *recaka*, examining the length and subtleness of *prāṇāyāma*, selection of suitable *āsana*, effects of *prāṇāyāma* on sense organs and mind, technique of increasing the duration of *kuṃbhaka*, effects of *sagarbha* and *agarbha* types of *prāṇāyāma*, control of *prāṇa* and *apāna*, characteristics of *bahiṣṭha kuṃbhaka*, *udghāta lakṣaṇa*, measures of *prāṇāyāma* and elevation of *prāṇāyāma* on the basis of *kāla* and *saṃkhyā*.

## Chapter XXXIX:

Out of the four stages in *yoga* the first stage called *ārambhāvasthā* has been discussed here. *prāṇāyāma* is one of the means of attainment of this stage. In this *meru kumbhaka* has been given great importance. This *kumbhaka* in the longer run culminates in *nisarga kumbhaka*. The importance, characteristics, results of this has been elaborately discussed along with the technique of piercing of *ādhāracakra*, *pīṭhotthāna*, *agnijaya* etc.

## Chapter XL:

There is a description of the techniques of controlling ten *vāyus* such as *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *nāga*, *kūrma* etc. Different practices like *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* etc. are discussed on the basis of their duration. Thus the importance of *kāla* in the attainment of *siddhis* in *haṭhayoga* is explained.

**Chapter XLI:**

This chapter describes stages of *pratyāhāra* and *ghaṭāvasthā*. There is a mention of *marmas* or vital points in the body and their relationship with the removal of certain disorders by practising *pratyāhāra* on those vital points. Thus here we find the description of *pratyāhāra* according to *yājñavalkya* and *sūtasaṃhitā*.

**Chapter XLII:**

It describes the state of *paricayāvasthā* in which the *prāṇā* enters the *suṣumnā* and travels up. To reach this state, the intensity of *nisarga kumbhaka* required is mentioned.

**Chapter XLIII:**

There is a discussion about the effects of the process of *śakticālana*. Through the long practice of *prāṇāyāma*, *kuṇḍalinī* is aroused and it ascends to the *sahasrāra* after piercing the three knots, as a result of which one attains the success in the stability of *bindu*, stability of mental activities and in *vajrolī* etc.

**Chapter XLIV:**

The process of *śakticālana* is elaborately described. Arousal of *kuṇḍalinī* through *prāṇāyāma*, the process of *sarasvatī cālana*, piercing of the *cakras* and *granthis* (knots) are the topics discussed with their results.

**Chapter XLV:**

*utkarṣa prṇāyāma* forms an integral part of *śakticālana*. An elaborate narratioon of utkarṣa *prṇāyāma* has been provided in this chapter.

**Chapter XLVI:**

It deals with the state of *niṣpatti*, mainly related to *dhāraṇā*. An attempt has been made to co-ordinate the concept

and practice of *dhāraṇā* as explained in the PYS and in *haṭha* texts. On the basis of duration of *dhāraṇā* leading to proficiency in it and following the results a co-ordination is attempted with the results of *saṃyama*. Therefore, this chapter is named as *saṃyamasiddhikāla vivecana*.

### Chapter XLII:

In the light of the supernatural powers resulting from the process of *saṃyama* as described in the PYS different kinds of *dhāraṇā* of *haṭhayoga* are described in this chapter. It is indicated that different *dhāraṇās* of *haṭhayoga* on five elements lead to the attainment of *vivekakhyāti*. In an attempt of co-ordination with the PYS the terms of PYS like *madhumati, upasarga, kleśabīja, viśoka* etc. have been profusely used.

### Chapter XLVIII:

This chapter also discusses the attainment of supernatural powers through *dhāraṇā* in which seven and ten types have been mentioned. Thus by the practice of *dhāraṇā* how various disorders are removed and how one attains the feeling of well-being has been described.

### Chapter XLIX:

This chapter elaborately discusses the topic of *dhyāna* in the light of description of PYS. Views of other authorities like *purāṇas* etc. on *dhyāna* have been synthesised. Different topics related with *dhyāna* such as definition, characteristics, *saguṇa-nirguṇā dhyāna*, duration of *dhyāna*, *sūkṣma-sthūla dhyāna*, *sabīja-nirbīja dhyāna*, *ḍhyāna* on the various *cakras* according to *haṭhayoga*, *nirguṇā dhyāna* in *śāṃbhavī-mudrā*, *saguṇa dhyāna-mudrā*, *dhyāna* ultimately leading to the state of *saṃprajñāta* and *asaṃprajñāta* or void state etc. are elaborately discussed.

**Chapter L:**

This chapter is also related to the description of *dhyāna* in which elaborate techniques and experiences of *saguṇa* and *nirguṇā dhyāna* are discussed. To attain *agarbha-dhyāna* from *sagarbha-dhyāna* and from *sabīja-dhyāna* to *nirbīja-dhyāna* the mind has to be stabilised which is done by *dhyāna* of *īśvara* with loving devotion. It is a superior technique along with *viveka, vairāgya, abhyāsa* and control of *prāṇa*. There is an elaborate description of *bhrūmadhya-dhyāna, nāsāgra-dhyāna, jyotir-dhyāna, ātma-dhyāna, śiva-dhyāna* etc. Similarly, *sadhūma* and *nirdhūma dhyāna* in the *nirguṇā* type has been presented along with its experiences in a lucid manner.

**Chapter LI:**

It describes characteristics of *samādhi* and its varieties of *saṃprajñāta, asaṃprajñāta, sabīja* and *nirbīja*. The process of going to *samādhi* from *dhyāna* has been described in terms of duration the state is held. In this context a co-ordination has been attempted with *unmanī* state, union of *kuṇḍalinī* in the *sahasrāra*, balanced state of *guṇas, vyuthāna* state and *saṃ skāranirodha* as mentioned in the PYS.

**Chapter LII:**

Description of *apakarṣa prāṇāyāma* is found here in which there is a discussion about how the *prāṇa* is ascended to *sahasrāra* through *suṣumnā* channel while piercing different *cakras* and descended downwards. There is also a description of the technique of absorbing *prāṇā* into the three units of OM, namely, A, U and M.

**Chapter LIII:**

Technique of *utkrānti prāṇāyāma* is given here. When a *yogī* wishes to leave his mortal coil at will he uses this type of *prāṇāyāma*. He withdraws all his sense organs into the

mind and with the combination of *prāṇā* leads through all the *cakras* to the *sahasrāra* where with the union of *parama śiva* and contemplating on *praṇava* leaves his *prāṇa* through *brahmarandhra*. Similarly, when the *yogī* becomes aware that his death is approaching and if he does not want to leave his body, resorts to the same technique and holds the *prāṇa* in *sahasrāra* until the time of death passes off. Thus he can voluntarily avoid the time of death.

### Chapter LIV:

This chapter on *nādānusandhāna* discusses the technique of listening to the *anāhatanāda* and absorption of the mind into it. In the context of *nāda* the four stages of *ārambha, ghaṭa, paricaya* and *niṣpatti* have been described. There is a description of the experiences of different kinds of *nāda* resulting from the piercing of every knot. In this connection, the four stages of *nāda*, namely, *parā, paśyantī, madhyamā* and *vaikhari* and their conditions have been described.

### Chapter LV:

In this chapter on *rājayoga* how the various practices of *haṭhayoga* lead to the attainment of the state of *rājayoga* has been described. The topics such as the conditions of a *rājayogī*, transformation of *haṃsa mantra* into *sohaṃ mantra*, union of *prāṇa* and *apāna*, are discussed at length.

### Chapter LVI:

How to know the time of approaching of death has been explained with the help of the quotations from different *purāṇas*. The life-span has been decided on the basis of flow of breath through the nostrils. In this connection *chāyā-puruṣa lakṣaṇa* and other indications of death have been described.

With this the text ends.

**Chapter L:**

This chapter is also related to the description of *dhyāna* in which elaborate techniques and experiences of *saguṇa* and *nirguṇā dhyāna* are discussed. To attain *agarbha-dhyāna* from *sagarbha-dhyāna* and from *sabīja-dhyāna* to *nirbīja-dhyāna* the mind has to be stabilised which is done by *dhyāna* of *īśvara* with loving devotion. It is a superior technique along with *viveka, vairāgya, abhyāsa* and control of *prāṇa*. There is an elaborate description of *bhrūmadhya-dhyāna, nāsāgra-dhyāna, jyotir-dhyāna, ātma-dhyāna, śiva-dhyāna* etc. Similarly, *sadhūma* and *nirdhūma dhyāna* in the *nirguṇā* type has been presented along with its experiences in a lucid manner.

**Chapter LI:**

It describes characteristics of *samādhi* and its varieties of *saṃprajñāta, asaṃprajñāta, sabīja* and *nirbīja*. The process of going to *samādhi* from *dhyāna* has been described in terms of duration the state is held. In this context a co-ordination has been attempted with *unmanī* state, union of *kuṇḍalinī* in the *sahasrāra*, balanced state of *guṇas, vyuthāna* state and *saṃ skāranirodha* as mentioned in the PYS.

**Chapter LII:**

Description of *apakarṣa prāṇāyāma* is found here in which there is a discussion about how the *prāṇa* is ascended to *sahasrāra* through *suṣumnā* channel while piercing different *cakras* and descended downwards. There is also a description of the technique of absorbing *prāṇā* into the three units of OM, namely, A, U and M.

**Chapter LIII:**

Technique of *utkrānti prāṇāyāma* is given here. When a *yogī* wishes to leave his mortal coil at will he uses this type of *prāṇāyāma*. He withdraws all his sense organs into the

mind and with the combination of *prāṇā* leads through all the *cakras* to the *sahasrāra* where with the union of *parama śiva* and contemplating on *praṇava* leaves his *prāṇa* through *brahmarandhra*. Similarly, when the *yogī* becomes aware that his death is approaching and if he does not want to leave his body, resorts to the same technique and holds the *prāṇa* in *sahasrāra* until the time of death passes off. Thus he can voluntarily avoid the time of death.

**Chapter LIV:**

This chapter on *nādānusandhāna* discusses the technique of listening to the *anāhatanāda* and absorption of the mind into it. In the context of *nāda* the four stages of *ārambha*, *ghaṭa*, *paricaya* and *niṣpatti* have been described. There is a description of the experiences of different kinds of *nāda* resulting from the piercing of every knot. In this connection, the four stages of *nāda*, namely, *parā*, *paśyantī*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī* and their conditions have been described.

**Chapter LV:**

In this chapter on *rājayoga* how the various practices of *haṭhayoga* lead to the attainment of the state of *rājayoga* has been described. The topics such as the conditions of a *rājayogī*, transformation of *haṃsa mantra* into *sohaṃ mantra*, union of *prāṇa* and *apāna*, are discussed at length.

**Chapter LVI:**

How to know the time of approaching of death has been explained with the help of the quotations from different *purāṇas*. The life-span has been decided on the basis of flow of breath through the nostrils. In this connection *chāyā-puruṣa lakṣaṇa* and other indications of death have been described.

With this the text ends.